

## **Measuring the Impact and Accomplishments of the CPPW Safe Routes to School Strategy**



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**Prepared for the Minneapolis Department of Health and Family Support**

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The purpose of this document is to capture the activities and impacts of the Minneapolis Public Schools Safe Routes to School (SRTS) initiative in ten schools during the 2011-2012 school year. Funded by the Minneapolis Department of Health and Family Support's Communities Putting Prevention to Work (CPPW) initiative, MPS Safe Routes staff worked closely with ten schools during the 2011-2012 school year: Andersen, Armatage, Bethune, Edison, Green Central, Kenny, Lucy Craft Laney, Nellie Stone Johnson, Northeast Middle, and Waite Park. MPS helped each school identify Safe Routes to School champions and met with each school several times to help create and then implement individualized [travel plans](#). Most schools' travel plan goals included activities in the following eight core areas.

- Set up a walking school bus (walking clubs, bike trains, and bike clubs)
- Plan a bike/walk to school event
- Develop suggested walking route maps
- Expand the SRTS network through encouragement and education
- Connect with SRTS resources
- Plan a bike safety event
- Support/expand school safety patrols
- Identify arrival and dismissal issues and solutions

This report begins with some major accomplishments from this year: the CPPW bike fleets, selection of MPS in the MnDOT SRTS curriculum pilot, and the award of the MnDOT non-infrastructure grant. The report continues with details from particular schools of activities and progress made in the eight core areas. The report then briefly summarizes accomplishments of the SRTS Work Group and the expansion of the MPS SRTS website. The report ends with the full text of letters of support from the four CPPW schools that were part of the MnDOT non-infrastructure grant applications (Andersen, Lucy Craft Laney, Northeast Middle, and Green Central). The letters highlight the some of the accomplishments of these schools during the 2011-2012 school year.

### **CPPW Bicycle Fleet**

MPS Safe Routes to School spent this year joining ten school communities and learning their needs. Lack of access to bicycles and the distance some children lived from school were two strong barriers to biking to and from school. Through a competitive application process, CPPW funds were used to award two fleets of bicycles to be shared among five school communities. One fleet of bicycles is shared among Lucy Craft Laney, Nellie Stone Johnson, and Loring Community School. The other fleet of bicycles is shared between Waite Park and Northeast Middle School. Both fleets are used within the school day, before and after school through community education and in collaboration with the parks in a summer program to provide bike safety education. The bicycle fleets provide limitless other possibilities for

biking within the community, such as field trip transportation, bike clubs, reward trips, and classroom rides. The fleets created immediate excitement within the school communities and this report is peppered with examples of “good news” coming out of these fleets.

The two CPPW fleets are paving the way for other bike fleets. MPS Safe Routes worked with MPS Legal to establish a process for taking the bikes off school grounds with children. MPS Safe Routes also created a [bike education webpage](#), to assist staff leading bike rides and has linked several communities with helmets and other resources.

### **MnDOT Safe Routes to School Pedestrian and Bicycle Curriculum Pilot**

The CPPW bicycle fleets helped ensure that MPS received a spot in the statewide bicycle and pedestrian curriculum pilot. MPS Safe Routes was also pleased to *host* the two-day MnDOT curriculum training on May 17<sup>th</sup> and 18<sup>th</sup> at Webster Community School for communities across the state. While the curriculum will be piloted in two school communities (Nellie Stone Johnson, Northeast/Waite Park) during the 2012-2013 school year, SRTS MnDOT was able to train teachers from seven MPS school communities on the new curriculum this May (Green, Andersen, Pillsbury, Lucy Laney, Loring, Nellie Stone Johnson, Northeast/Waite Park). The P.E./Health lead and the adaptive P.E. lead for the District were also trained.

A few of the teachers who attended the training have already put into practice with students what they learned at the training; all said they will use it next year. All seven schools have or will have access to a school-owned bicycle fleet to use with the curriculum. MPS Safe Routes believes our participation in the pilot will create a stronger, more relevant curriculum for the entire state. The curriculum will increase bicycle safety education for students across the district and also aid schools looking to do bike safety events.

### **Bike Maintenance/Build-a-Bike Shop at Green Central**

This fall Richard Green Central Park Community School was one of twenty-five schools nationwide to receive a \$1,000 mini grant from the National Center for Safe Routes to School. This grant helped establish a bike maintenance shop and build-a-bike class through community education at Green Central. Through this after-school class, students have gained life-long skills, learning bike maintenance and the “how-to’s” of bike salvage. Twenty-three students now own bicycles they have built with their own labor and skill. Students also receive helmets and locks with the bicycles they build. Some students now use their bicycles to bike to school. Others share the bicycles among family members.

While MPS has supported these efforts—helping with the SRTS grant application, providing encouragement and incentives, offering technical assistance, and providing some bicycles and helmets—the Green Bike Shop exists because of the hard work of the super-star Americorps staff who is championing these efforts. MPS is pleased to help duplicate these efforts at other sites through the MnDOT Non-infrastructure Grant.

### **MnDOT Non-infrastructure Grant**

The CPPW bicycle fleet, the bicycle maintenance shop and other SRTS efforts described in this report helped lay the foundation of MPS's application for the MnDOT non-infrastructure grant. Through CPPW work, MPS Safe Routes understood what communities lacked and desired. In addition the efforts this year helped demonstrate planning and commitment of individual schools to Safe Routes to School, which was a scored part of the application. In May, MPS was awarded \$60,000 in non-infrastructure funding that will establish bike fleets and bike maintenance shops at six MPS sites: Andersen, Green, Lucy Laney, Northeast Middle School, Sanford Middle School, and Jefferson. The grant will enable the two CPPW fleets to add adaptive bikes, storage equipment and perhaps more bicycles. Lucy Laney also will receive funds to establish crossing guards and walking buses. Letters of support from the four CPPW schools that were part of the application are included at the end of this document.

## **Walking Buses**

MPS supported walking buses at four of the CPPW schools and walk/bike clubs at an additional three schools.

Support for [walking buses](#) this year from MPS has included promoting walking buses at school events, giving school-specific technical assistance on the "how-to's," providing stop paddles and vests, and providing occasional incentives to use as encouragement. Responding to parent concerns about liability, MPS worked with MPS General Counsel to create a [Walking Bus Consent Form](#) to cover walking bus volunteers. This winter, MPS Safe Routes to School also held its first ever Parent Workshop—providing the "how-to's" of establishing walking buses and organizing walk-to-school events. Attendees came from nine different school communities (CPPW: Andersen, Armatage, Green, and Northeast). As a direct result, a workshop attendee from Loring Community School established a weekly walking bus. Originating in the bus zone with more than 25 regular walkers, it has been running once a week since April. The workshop also led to another more informal route at Loring—with about twelve walkers.

The Kenny Community walking bus started this February with about five walkers, but it quickly grew as parents and children learned of its existence. Running once a week from the bus zone, it now has more than fifteen regular walkers. An additional route is planned for next year, once construction is finished on Lyndale Avenue. Both these routes originate in the bus zone.

Waite Park also has a walking bus that has about fifteen walkers to school. Originating in the bus zone, it runs almost every day in spring and fall. This walking bus also organized a winter walk day in celebration of the 100<sup>th</sup> day of school—drawing about 40 walkers.

Armatage and Bethune both have walking buses originating in the walk zone, made up of two or three families each, who walk together with the children, share duties, and look out for the whole community.

Overwhelmingly children love the walking bus. They love being with their friends and being about to move around. "I like to walk," says one student. "I like the exercise." Parents also speak highly of the walking bus. One parent reported that her child's attendance improved because he didn't want to miss

the walking bus. Others have reported community benefits, like children learning pedestrian safety skills, gaining environmental awareness, and learning the names of neighbors who don't have children and live on the route. Some say neighbors will greet the walking bus as it comes by. Parents report the walk to school provides quality time spent with their children and like the chance to observe nature with their children.

Lucy Laney and Green have plans for walking buses next school year.

### **Bike Trains**

One CPPW school implemented a bike train.

Lucy Laney has a bike train that runs to and from school resulting directly from students' experience of biking to school for the first time on National Bike to School Day. Most of the students use bicycles from the CPPW fleet. About a three mile trip one way on the parkway, this "train" runs with an average of nine participants once a week to and from school. For many of the children, it is the first time they have biked on Theodore Wirth Parkway. At the end of a recent ride home from school one student sighed and smiled saying, "Everything was just perfect today."

Andersen school plans to pursue a bike train next school year.

### **Walking Clubs**

One CPPW school created a walking club.

Lucy Laney also has a walking club with 30 regular middle school walkers who walk the perimeter of the playground, most days, during recess. The students enjoy the physical activity and also connecting with the adult staff who walks with them. "Are we walking today?" they often ask. Sometimes they use pedometers purchased with CPPW funds to measure their progress as they walk. They have easily traveled, figuratively, across the United States.

### **Bike Clubs**

Three CPPW schools created bike clubs.

Receiving a CPPW bike fleet allowed Northeast Middle School to quickly create an after school bike club. First slated to run once a week, the children convinced the school to run it twice a week and to continue it even after community education after school classes had officially ended for the school year (running April 19 through the end of May). Students have learned road safety and handling skills. They have discovered the parkways near the school and have biked to North Minneapolis where many children who attend Northeast Middle School live. There are about eight regular riders. The leader reports that through these rides, students are gaining confidence and a sense of accomplishment. Already, there are gains in fitness, with less walking of bicycles up steep hills. Staff also says that the students are discovering and beginning to identify with the community of serious bicycle riders that they come across as they bike the parkways and streets of Minneapolis. On one ride, one student attempted to race an

elite cyclist up a steep hill. He never quit, even as the cyclist got farther and farther ahead of him. “I’ll catch her one day,” he declared.

*From the Northeast Middle School (NEMS) Champion: **NEMS’s Beacons-inspired Bikesters** gained valuable handling skills last Thursday. Riding in the otherwise deserted B-Building breezeway, they completed slalom, obstacle avoidance, and “Chaos” drills. They wound up the afternoon with a slow bike race (last to finish wins). The Bikesters will roll again tomorrow (Tuesday) and then one last time this coming Thursday. NEMS plans to implement the MnDOT’s Bike Safety Curriculum school-wide during the 2012-2013 academic year, so expect to learn all about it then.*

Northeast has also used the CPPW bike fleet as transportation to a field trip at the Metrodome, (in part because the school was out of funds). Five students biked fourteen miles, round trip. Though they were attending a wellness event, all agreed the bicycle ride was, by far, the best, most active part of the day. The children received a “shout-out” at the event for biking to it, and gained a strong sense of accomplishment.

Lucy Laney has also used the CPPW bike fleet to create an after school bike club. Running once or twice a week this spring through Community Education, about a dozen riders have gained bike skills, fitness, and confidence as they have ridden the streets and parkways of Minneapolis. Students have expanded their world, discovering the beautiful parkways less than a half a mile from the school. The parkways are their favorite place to ride. The kids in the bike club speak freely of the benefits of the school owning bikes—that they are gaining bike safety skills, learning different routes, getting exercise, building muscle and getting outside to “enjoy the beautiful day.” Best of all, they are having fun. The Mayor was able to join about a dozen Lucy Laney bicycle students on a recent ride. After dropping the Mayor at his location, the children convinced staff to continue to ride and ride and ride.

MPS Safe Routes also secured nineteen smaller donated (used) bicycles for Andersen school through a program called Free Bikes 4 Kidz. This spring, seven first and second graders took part in an after school bike club. Students learned bike skills and together discovered the Midtown Greenway bike path. Though the Greenway is just a few blocks from Andersen School, none of the children in the Andersen Bike Club had ever been on it before this class. Staff reported the children increased their bicycle skills and confidence through this class. The staff who led the bike club also attended MnDOT training and said he will use the bicycle and pedestrian curriculum with students next year. He also would like to organize a bike train next year, and MPS plans to assist.

Loring and Waite Park are also establishing summer bike club/safety sessions this summer with these small used bicycles.

### **Walk and Bike to School Events**

Nine of the ten CPPW schools hosted at least one [walk or bike to school event](#) this year.

Here are estimates of CPPW participants this fall based on registration estimates: Northeast Middle School (40), Nellie Stone Johnson (100), Andersen (75), Armatage (50), and Waite Park (50).

This fall, students biking to Edison from North Minneapolis arrived at school a full half hour early on International Walk to School Day. Having never biked to school before, they didn't realize how quickly they could wheel themselves to school. Similar stories have been reported from Northeast Middle School this year.

### **Spring 2012**

The first ever National Bike to School Day was on May 9<sup>th</sup>. In celebration of this inaugural event, MPS Safe Routes took the lead in encouraging schools to participate in spring walk and bike to school events. MPS Safe Routes supported these events through a step by step guide, website resources, templates, technical assistance, and prize packages for schools that participated. More than fifteen schools and 2,500 children participated in spring walk and bike to school events (1,000 CPPW: Andersen (200), Green Central (275+), Edison (200), Kenny (100), Lucy Laney (60), NEMS (40), and Waite Park (145)). Some schools said that they would not have participated in these events if not for MPS Safe Routes. Others reported their schools had events that were better run, safer, and had larger turnouts because of MPS Safe Routes support.

Three CPPW schools had rates of participation that doubled their walk zones: Andersen, Green and Waite Park.

Northeast Middle School and Waite Park had full bike racks—where they are usually fairly empty.

Schools awarded golden tennis shoes and golden bicycles for the classroom with the most bikers and walkers. At one school, students did a golden bicycle dance.

Quotes from Green Central:

*from the School Resource Officer who walked along: "The event promoted healthy bodies and a healthy planet while building stronger community relations and involvement. The event was a huge success and included hundreds of students and dozens of parents who all walked to school in one of four groups in support of the event. The parents walked away impressed with the well organized event."*

*From the Family Liaison who organized the event: "It was amazing. It was so cool to see the kids walking their own neighborhood looking so proud and happy. There were a lot of neighbors checking us out and asking about our school as we walked through. It's now my personal goal for our school to have a regular walking bus every school day."*

Quote from Waite Park:

*Parent: "Here are the final #'s for walking/biking to school today. Over 110 Waite Park Students from hi-5 to 5th grade participated today!!! There were also many parents, siblings & teachers/staff!! Great turnout!*

*"There were also 35 bikes in the bike racks today! Many, many more than usual. The front rack was completely full. Also, congratulations to Ms. Carpenter's (Golden shoe trophy) class for having 13 participants and Mrs. G's (Golden*



*Bike Trophy) class for having 14 participants and the most bikers!!! The class was super excited to win the Golden Bike!!! They even did a golden bike dance! Thanks again to Jenny Bordon for all the goodies and help!"*

## **Develop a Suggested Route Map**

Nine of the ten CPPW Schools developed a suggested route map this year (Nellie Stone Johnson already had one).

CPPW has helped MPS Safe Routes "map" primary walk/bike routes to and from Minneapolis Public Schools. Developed in conjunction with MPS Transportation, schools and families, and a graphic artist, [the maps](#) locate stop signs and traffic control signals and identify primary routes for walking and biking to and from school. Walk/bike maps are distributed to families by schools and Safe Routes shares them with MPS Emergency Management, Safety & Security, School Resource Officers, Transportation, and police precincts.

MPS Safe Routes worked with school communities to develop each map, by gathering community input, examining where students live, and identifying the location infrastructure such as stop signs and stoplights. Although designed primarily for families within the MPS designated "walk zones," the maps show routes that extend farther into neighborhoods.

These maps are valuable in a number of ways and parent response has been overwhelmingly positive. Gathering input opens conversations with the school community about walking to school and the benefits of walking, and opens the door to other Safe Routes activities. In addition, safety (or the perception of safety) is a common barrier indicated by parents to allowing their children to walk to school. Many parents feel these maps begin to address issues of safety because the suggested routes are designed to make use of controlled intersections, sidewalks, appropriate signage, and enough population or traffic flow to have "eyes on the street," from a safety perspective. The maps also help to create a culture of walking within a school. The maps create the sense that the whole community is looking out for the children and that walking together is desired. They put forth the idea that "our school community walks to school."

Andersen school has a walk zone of about 150 students. MPS worked with the school to develop the [Andersen map](#): walking main routes, talking to families, and meeting with the parent leadership team. The process opened conversations about the benefits of walking to school and allowed MPS the opportunity to change misperceptions about walking to school (e.g. parent: it will make kids too tired for the school day; MPS response: physical activity increases achievement and energy). The parent leadership team enthusiastically responded to the process and went on to organize the walk-to-school day in May.

## **Education, Encouragement, and Expanding the SRTS Network**

All ten CPPW schools have used email, website, or newsletter blurbs to promote Safe Routes efforts. All ten CPPW schools were reached by MPS staff attending events, PTA/PTO meetings, or resource fairs.



### ***MPS Families***

MPS Safe Routes has attended many Area District Parent meetings this year (North/east=2 times, South=2 times, Southwest=1 time). At the fall Area A meeting, MPS Safe Routes presented to the entire group about [walk maps](#), [walk-to-school events](#) and [walking buses](#) (about 40 in attendance). At all events, staff provided Safe Routes information, encouragement, and pedestrian and bicycling safety information (100's in attendance). MPS Safe Routes staff also attended parent meetings or events in every CPPW school that did not have an identified active parent/student safe routes champion (6 of the 10 schools). The purpose was both education and encouragement. These efforts reached about 2,000 families (340 of which are 1:1 or more in-depth interactions).

MPS Safe Routes attended the Multilingual Annual Resource Fair for all Latino families on April 16<sup>t</sup> (a Spanish-speaking parent meeting/event): MPS provided introductions to MPS Safe Routes to School and available resources and encouragement for upcoming walking and biking to school events to approximately 200 attendees. MPS Safe Routes also talked directly with approximately 30 individual parents providing encouragement for walking to school, information about upcoming events, and bicycle and pedestrian safety information and tip sheets in Spanish.

MPS Safe Routes attended the Passport to Healthy Living resource fair at Green Central, providing encouragement for walking to school, information about upcoming events, and bicycle and pedestrian safety information and tip sheets in Spanish to about 80 families.

MPS Safe Routes attended the Green Central PTO meeting (about 30 parents) providing encouragement for walking to school and bicycle and pedestrian safety information and tip sheets in Spanish. We also described walking buses and provided examples of walking buses at other schools (using the CPPW-funded *Making it Better* media campaign video, which featured the Lyndale Elementary School walking bus.) Staff described the process of becoming a school with a vibrant walking community. Green's participation in Bike to School Day was a direct result from this meeting.

Andersen: MPS Safe Routes staff attended one family night and two site council (parent leadership) meetings providing safety information and encouragement to walk children to school, providing direct contact with approximately 50 parents. Andersen participation in May 9<sup>th</sup> events resulted directly from MPS attendance at the spring meeting. MPS also provided safety information to the Family Liaison who distributed the materials at other family events (approximately 200 students).

Northeast Middle School: MPS Safe Routes attended one family meeting and the Health and Wellness Carnival after school event, providing safety information and encouragement to about ten parents and 50 children—mostly one on one. The Safe Routes Champion at NEMS writes a weekly email with about 500 recipients that frequently contains bike information—encouragement for biking to school, upcoming events or general just getting out there. It also contains education—e.g. “the ABC’s”, rules of the road, wear your helmet. Note: The wellness event is a yearly event and the school intends to use the CPPW fleet of bicycles to provide on-bike safety education at next year's event.

Bethune: Responding to concerns from staff and parents, especially in light of the shortened daylight hours, MPS helped create a walking newsletter with safety information and encouragement for the entire school (about 400 children). Every child also received a “Be Safe. Be Seen.” reflective zipper tag (paid for with CPPW funds) with the newsletter. A Bethune staff also provided safety information at family events (100+). MPS Safe Routes also attended one family event, providing pedestrian and bicycle safety information directly to about 20 parents.

Lucy Laney: MPS Safe Routes attended one parent meeting connecting with about five parents, who are considered leaders in the school. MPS provided safety information and encouragement.

Nellie Stone Johnson: MPS Safe Routes attended one parent event providing safety information and encouragement 1:1 to about 25 parents.

#### Prospective MPS Families:

MPS Safe Routes attended two kindergarten/school choice fairs—one for the district as a whole and one for the Northeast Community. In addition to providing encouragement for walking/biking to school and pedestrian and bicycling safety information, MPS Safe Routes encouraged families to consider the ability to walk or bike to school when they were selecting schools. Currently fewer than 20% of MPS students live in the walk zone of their school (Waite Park had a goal of increasing the number for students who live in the walk zone—but we won’t have these numbers before June 5<sup>th</sup>.) Together these events were attended by hundreds and hundreds of people. MPS Safe Routes talked to/provided literature directly to about 50.

### ***Staff***

MPS Safe Routes provided Safe Routes background and information, encouragement and how-to’s about getting the school community walking and biking safely at three staff workshops attended by about 40 people.

### **Connect with SRTS Resources**

MPS SRTS has connected all ten CPPW schools with SRTS resources. As already discussed, MPS was able to get school-owned fleets of new bicycles into five school communities and used bicycles into another three communities. The CPPW bike fleets were made possible also, in part, because Allina donated the helmets for the bicycle fleets to MPS. CPPW schools that have received donated helmets include Nellie Stone Johnson, Lucy Laney (fleet+), Northeast Middle School (fleet + prize for Wellness Carnival), Kenny (bike event), and Andersen. Donated helmets were also included in the prize packages for schools participating in spring walk and bike events. Pillsbury has been building its own bicycle fleets, and MPS Safe Routes was able to give thirty helmets to them for this effort (and train staff on the MnDOT curriculum).

The Mall of America has also donated mystery tickets at MPS Safe Routes—these were used to support all the spring walk/bike events. In addition they supported the school patrols at Bethune, Kenny, Armatage, Waite Park; wellness efforts at Nellie Stone Johnson and Green Central; and the recess walking club at Lucy Laney.

Neither the used bicycles, helmets, nor the mystery tickets “came” to MPS Safe Routes. MPS sought out these resources—because they were needed/desired by the schools.

At all the education/encouragement events MPS Safe Routes also provided connections to relevant information and/or happenings in the larger [Minneapolis biking and walking community](#). For example—at the fall events, MPS promoted the opening of Venture North Bike Walk & Coffee. At all of the spring encouragement/education events, MPS connected families to information about the free family bicycling series put on by the Minneapolis Bike Walk Ambassadors this spring and summer. MPS also promoted the Open Streets events and handed out hundreds of Minneapolis Bicycle Maps.

MPS has connected the Bike Alliance and the Bike Walk Ambassadors to several schools. A League Certified Instructor (LCI), Nick Mason, has ridden with the Lucy Laney bikers, where he provided safety instruction and bike maintenance instruction. MPS has also connected Lucy Laney to Venture North for bike maintenance education.

MPS Safe Routes was able to link the Edison Safe Routes Champion to Catalyst, a local nonprofit that promotes youth-led wellness initiatives. Edison is trying to encourage students to bike and walk to Edison, however bike theft is an issue and many Edison students are unable to afford U-locks. Catalyst provided a mini-grant to start a U-lock sharing program where students can check out a lock from the library for a specific period of time (similar to how students check out books) and are responsible for giving them back. MPS Safe Routes provided technical assistance for this project (e.g. MPS Legal—lock document).

MPS Safe Routes has also linked schools to grant opportunities including the National SRTS mini-grants and the Allina Hospital Neighborhood Connections grant.

### **Plan a Bike Safety Event**

One CPPW school hosted a bike event and another has plans for one for this summer.

Kenny school hosted a bike night in conjunction with their carnival on May 31<sup>st</sup>. About 100 children and families rode their bikes and visited various stations which included helmet fitting, bike decorating, an off-road course, rules of the road, and theft prevention. MPS Safe Routes, Freewheel Bike Shop, Penn Cycle, Midtown Greenway Coalition all participated.

In conjunction with Bike Cops for Kids, Lucy Laney will host a bicycle safety rodeo on June 21 using the CPPW bicycles for this rodeo. MPS Safe Routes will attend to provide support and assistance.

Many schools would like to do a bike safety event but barriers include access to bicycles, volunteer hours needed, over-booked school calendars, and lack of organizations to support logistics. MPS continues to work to remove these barriers and expects growth in this area: Four more MPS school communities will obtain school-owned bicycles next year. In addition, the new MnDOT bicycle curriculum will provide resources for school to use in creating a bicycle rodeo, and MnDOT SRTS may be able to provide hands-on support in organizing and running such an event. Six teachers received training and resources on the MnDOT curriculum and some have already run mini-rodeos (Northeast Middle and Lucy Laney) with their bike clubs. Furthermore, the transportation representative to the SRTS work group completed LCI training this spring and is ready to support MPS schools in safety education.

### **Support/Expand School Safety Patrols**

MPS provided two school patrol advisors with incentives, technical assistance, and best practice guidelines created after observing and interviewing some of the strongest patrol groups in MPS.

Bethune: 6 patrols, one corner

*From the patrol advisor: "We are beyond excited!!!! We had 6 patrols at the end of the year, so they worked hard this year. I'm proud of them for doing such a great job. Thanks for your support and developing our safe walk program. It's going strong."*

Armatage: 39 patrols, 4 corners

*From the patrol advisor: It was great meeting with you and getting some of your ideas. The pictures in front of the lockers are such a simple and good way to bring up the morale among patrols.*

### **Identify Arrival and Dismissal Issues and Solutions**

Over the past two years, Safe Routes has worked with arrival/dismissal issues at 12 sites, including five CPPW schools (Armatage, Andersen, Green, Kenny, and Waite Park). Typically, the work involves morning and afternoon observations over several days of automobile traffic, walk patterns, school bus drop-off and pick-up, adult staffing, Safety Patrol, traffic signals, on-street parking, weather conditions, and conversations with staff, parents and, as appropriate, students.

At one specific site, Armatage Montessori School, in south Minneapolis, Safe Routes arrival/dismissal work resulted in several changes. Bus drop-off and pick-up were moved to a less busy street; bus traffic and parent drop-off were physically separated to different geographic areas. Family drop-off was moved to an adjacent park which has sidewalks, and traffic flow was altered so that families could pull through a circular drive and drop off their students who are greeted and helped out of cars by school staff members. Safety Patrol was added at one corner to help with street crossing, and city street signage was changed to support the new system. The School Resource Officer was involved in the planning and periodically monitors arrival/dismissal. School administration, staff, and parents joined

with Safe Routes staff and colleagues from Transportation, Emergency Management, Safety & Security, and the School Resource Officer to implement these changes.

### **MPS Safe Routes to School Work Group**

Understanding that multidisciplinary partnerships are vital to the success of safe routes efforts, an inter-agency, district level Safe Routes to School work group was established in January 2009. Active members include representatives from the City of Minneapolis Department of Public Works, Department of Health and Family Support, Bike Walk Ambassador Program, as well as from the Minneapolis Police Department and School Resource Officers. Additionally, the MPS departments of Transportation, Community Education, Emergency Management, Safety and Security, and Student Support Services all attend and contribute. The work group is championed and convened by MPS Safe Routes to School staff. The work group meets monthly to identify strategies to support Safe Routes activities at individual schools and the district and to consider how best to align efforts and resources. As appropriate, the workgroup has engaged other community stakeholders to partner with them in order to address community safety concerns at specific school sites.

Nearly all of the work described in this report has been touched by the work group in some way. Other accomplishments include:

- Assisted with expansion of Bus Safety Week to Transportation Safety Week that added pedestrian and bicycle safety lessons for pre K-5 grade students; reaching approximately 17,000 students annually.
- Presented at the 3<sup>rd</sup> National Safe Routes to School Conference in August 2011; panel presentation titled *Smooth and Safe! Student Arrival and Dismissal at School (enforcement)*.
- Invited community and governmental organizations to share resources (e.g. Venture North, Transit for Livable Communities, MN Department of Transportation).
- Exploring ways to support implementation of [Go-To cards](#) (bus passes) for high school students.
- **Continuing to provide a vital venue for expanded collaboration between the City of Minneapolis and Minneapolis Public Schools departments (including school infrastructure requests to Public Works; street maintenance and related bike/pedestrian improvements; traffic calming projects; bike rack installation; and snow removal practices).**

### **MPS Safe Routes Website**

This year MPS Safe Routes developed a more comprehensive [website](#) with sections for the toolkit, pedestrian education, bicycle education, walking buses, mapping, walk/bike to school events, the travel plans, and more. People are using this frequently updated website and MPS Safe Routes has been contacted on several occasions based on information found there.

### **From MnDOT Letters of Support**

Andersen Principal, Denise Wells:

*Please accept this letter as indication of support and commitment from Andersen United Community School to continue its partnership with Minneapolis Public Schools on Safe Routes to School.*

*This year's Safe Routes to School efforts at Andersen have laid the ground work for creating a culture of walking and biking at our school. We have mapped Safe Routes at parent meetings, promoted safe walking and biking at family events, and have taken part in national walk and bike to school days. Furthermore, we recently reorganized our buses, creating a safer arrival and dismissal for everyone and a bit of a walk for staff and children. It's not quite a "remote" drop, but this change created a healthy .3 mile walk from the entrance of school to the farthest bus.*

*Therefore, we support the Minneapolis Public Schools proposal to the Minnesota Department of Transportation for funding from its Safe Routes to School (SRTS) program. This funding will allow us to deepen our Safe Routes roots, effect culture change within the school, and establish life-long healthy habits for students and families.*

*A bike maintenance class at Andersen will provide experiential learning as a cornerstone to transforming a generation of young people into users of active transportation. Community Education will deliver bicycle maintenance and bicycle pedestrian safety classes through their school-based after school youth programs. Student will learn about bicycle mechanics, the benefits of non-auto transportation, and be able to perform a variety of repairs. Using a build-a-bike model, students will earn bicycles through these classes, filling a need at our school—access to bicycles.*

*Students will use the skills gained in the bike maintenance class to service a school-owned bicycle fleet. This fleet will provide access to even more students at Andersen. The ability to bicycle with groups of students during and outside of the school day will raise student and parent skill and comfort level with bicycling in the city. Furthermore, the proximity of Andersen to the Greenway makes our school an ideal location for bicycle education.*

*We look forward to building on our current Safe Routes to School efforts that improve the safety of the transportation network for all of our children.*

Lucy Craft Laney Principal, Dr. David Branch:

*Please accept this letter as indication of support and commitment from Lucy Craft Laney Community School to continue its partnership with Minneapolis Public Schools on Safe Routes to School.*

*Safe Routes to School efforts this year at our school have been championed by our wellness group. Shaken from summer violence near our school, the group began their efforts with a middle school walking club. Led by the school social worker, the group walks the perimeter of the school during recess, traveling figuratively across the United States. We have also mapped safe routes to school. We will also participate in the first ever national bike to school day on May 9<sup>th</sup>, with staff, the school resource officer, and I all walking or biking to school with groups of children and parents.*

*We are poised to take on the barriers to safe walking and biking in our community. Therefore, we support the Minneapolis Public Schools proposal to the Minnesota Department of Transportation for funding from its Safe Routes to School (SRTS) program. This funding will allow us to expand our Safe Routes efforts, creating sustainability, effecting culture change within the school and the surrounding community, and establishing life-long healthy habits for students and families.*

*This spring we acquired a fleet of fifteen bicycles to share with two nearby schools. We've created a process for staff to check out the bicycles and we are in the process of mapping routes on the nearby parkways with which to use them. Our P.E. teacher will attend the May MnDOT bicycle and pedestrian curriculum training, and we now have an after-*

school bike club. The bicycles will also be used in a Bike Cops for Kids bicycle safety rodeo this June. Additional resources and bicycles will expand the reach of this fleet. Furthermore, staff estimate that fewer than 20% of our students own bicycles. A Community Education school-based, build-a-bike bicycle maintenance class would provide built-in service for our school fleet of bicycles and create experiential learning opportunities, life-long skills and bicycle access for more students.

In addition, establishing crossing guards and walking buses that cross Lowry Avenue will allow students to walk to school safely while building community and creating safer neighborhoods for all. A program that provides budget and incentives to parents will foster leadership and help retain resources in the community.

We look forward to building on our current Safe Routes to School efforts that improve the safety of the transportation network for all of our children.

**Northeast Middle School Principal, Dr. Padmini Udupa:**

*Please accept this letter as indication of support and commitment from Northeast Middle School to continue its partnership with Minneapolis Public Schools on Safe Routes to School.*

*This year's Safe Routes to School efforts at Northeast Middle School have been championed by Joe Bloedorn, the family liaison who has educated families about bicycling through a weekly e-newsletter that reaches more than five hundred recipients. We participated in walk to school day this fall and we have mapped safe routes. This spring an influx of fifteen bicycles has caused an immediate enthusiasm for biking in our community. We created an after-school bike club through Community Education and have already used the bicycles as transportation for a school day field trip. Students biked more than fourteen miles round trip. These bicycles will also be used to pilot the MnDOT pedestrian and bicycle curriculum at Northeast Middle School and nearby Waite Park elementary through Community Education this fall.*

*Therefore, we support the Minneapolis Public Schools proposal to the Minnesota Department of Transportation for funding from its Safe Routes to School (SRTS) program. This funding will allow us to expand our Safe Routes efforts, creating sustainability, effecting culture change within the school, and establishing life-long healthy habits for students and families.*

*Community Education will deliver bicycle maintenance and bicycle pedestrian safety classes through their school-based after school youth programs. A bike maintenance class will help make the bicycle fleet self-sufficient—providing a group to regularly service and maintain the bicycles. It will provide experiential learning as a cornerstone to transforming a generation of young people into users of active transportation. Student will learn about bicycle mechanics, the benefits of non-auto transportation, and be able to perform a variety of repairs. Using a build-a-bike model, students will earn bicycles through these classes, filling a need at our school—access to bicycles. The fleet and the maintenance class will work hand in hand providing students with bicycles access both at home and at school.*

*We look forward to building on our current Safe Routes to School efforts that improve the safety of the transportation network for all of our children.*



Green Central Principal, Catalina Salas:

*Please accept this letter as indication of support and commitment from Richard R. Green Central Park Community School to continue its partnership with Minneapolis Public Schools on Safe Routes to School.*

*We have Safe Routes momentum at our school. Our Safe Routes champion, Iain Wilson, received a highly-competitive Safe Routes to School mini-grant this year that helped to fund a bike maintenance class through Community Education at Green Central. Our family liaison Braulio Carrasco has promoted walking and biking to school with parents. He has a goal of the entire school walking together on May 9<sup>th</sup>—creating four routes to school and finding staff and parents to lead them.*

*Thus, we support the Minneapolis Public Schools proposal to the Minnesota Department of Transportation for funding from its Safe Routes to School (SRTS) program. This funding will allow us to deepen our Safe Routes roots, effect culture change within the school, and establish life-long healthy habits for students and families.*

*The bike maintenance class at Green Central provides experiential learning as a cornerstone to transforming a generation of young people into users of active transportation. Additional funds would help other schools in the district will follow our model of delivering bicycle maintenance through Community Education. This program has been successful and we would like to see it replicated and expanded.*

*The addition of a bicycle fleet will cause an instant stir among our students and move access from one class to the entire student body. Maintained through the Community Education maintenance class, the bicycle fleet will be used for bicycle pedestrian safety classes within the school day and during school-based after school youth programs. Iain Wilson will attend the MnDOT regional trainer workshop on May 17<sup>th</sup> and then be poised to “train the trainer.” While many students live within a few miles of school, parents can be reluctant to allow children to bike to school, citing crime and traffic as concerns. The ability to bicycle with groups of students during and outside of the school day will raise student and parent skill and comfort level with bicycling in the city. Furthermore, the proximity of Green Central to both the Midtown and the River-Lake Greenways make our school an ideal location for bicycle education.*

*We look forward to building on our current Safe Routes to School efforts that improve the safety of the transportation network for all of our children.*